

City of Lewiston Press Release

Members of the Media: Below please find information about a **September 17th fundraising event, where Mayor Laurent F. Gilbert, Sr., will speak, regarding aid to drought victims in Somalia and Kenya.** Any media coverage you could render to help “get the word out” would be greatly appreciated. Thanks, Dottie

PRESS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LEWISTON: **Mayor Laurent F. Gilbert, Sr., will be attending a fundraising event for aid to Somalia and Kenya on September 17, 2011, and encourages residents to join him.** The fundraiser will be held at Lewiston’s Multi-Purpose Center, 145 Birch Street, commencing at 6:30 p.m. It will be hosted by Atlantic Global Aid and Partners for World Health, representatives of whom were at the Mayor’s recent press conference that focused on the desperate conditions abroad.

The September 17th fundraiser will bring needed medical supplies and nutritional supplements to the drought victims in Somalia and Kenya.

The multi-cultural dinner entitled, “***Mainers Answering the Call to Help to Relieve the Famine in the Horn of Africa,***” will feature guest speakers **The Honorable Congressman Michael Michaud and Lewiston’s Mayor Gilbert.**

Tickets will be available at the door or reserved and paid for at www.atlanticglobal.org Individual or business tickets may be purchased at whichever price level an attendee prefers to contribute-- \$20, \$50, or \$100 for an individual ticket or \$100, \$200, or \$250 for a business ticket.

Dr. Abdifatah Ahmed, Executive Director of Atlantic Global Aid, states, “***We cannot ignore as Mainers to let these children starve to death. We have to do whatever we can to save lives. Malnutrition is taking its toll on Somali children. Three-quarters of a million people are facing death by starvation in Somalia, according to the United Nations (UN) which has declared that famine has spread to the sixth southern region of the beleaguered Horn of Africa State.***”

The United Nation's Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit has reported that already ***"tens of thousands have died,"*** and ***"hundreds"*** more are still dying each day. ***"In total, four million people are in crisis in Somalia, with 750,000 people at risk of death in the coming four months in the absence of adequate response,"*** the report concluded.

UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia, Mark Bowden, adds, ***"We can't underestimate the scale of the crisis. This is the most serious harvest failure in 17 years, and there is a continuing deterioration. Other areas in the country are also falling into the critical category."***

Gilbert points out utter despair in the crowded wards of Banadir Hospital in Central Mogadishu that bear witness to the pain and suffering of famine victims. Children, some silent, some whimpering in pain are on plastic mattresses. One mother, Muslima Hassan Aden, was seen sitting on the floor cradling her two-year-old daughter, Shiqri, whose body was blotched with measles and whose eyes barely registered her mother's face. ***"She was such an active child, fit and always playing,"*** Aden, 28, said, ***"but our crops failed after we saw no rain for three years. All of our animals have died."***

More than 100,000 people have arrived in Somalia's seaside capital in recent months, driven from their rural homes by the hope of aid. The UN's World Food Program is handing out more than 100,000 hot meals a day.

Gilbert notes that ***"They just keep coming, and we need all the help possible to offer assistance to these individuals."***

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